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ART. I.—*Lutèce. Lettres sur la Vie Politique, Artistique, et Sociale de la France.* Par HENRI HEINE.

THIS book has but little to do with Heine the poet, Heine the fantasist,—with the Heine of the *Neue Gedichte*, the *Buch der Lieder*, the *Romanzero*, whose words go so well together with Schubert's music. Yet without this book you have but half of Heine,—you have the singer only, you have nothing of the man. In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, (if not even in the hundredth,) it will be found that a man's destinies complete his talent; and that whilst one part of all he produces springs from an interior source, the rest is derived from without. Now, Heine being granted, with his impressive character, his sarcastic humor, and the rudeness of his German nature, the *exterior* cause of his talent lies in one word,—France. If France had not existed, Voltaire would have invented it; but not so the nephew of the Jew banker of Hamburg. If France had not existed, Heine would not have been Heine; and we might have had a few very beautiful lyrics, worthy of a place even between those of Schiller and of Goethe, but of the strange, powerful, unlovable, and (in his way) complete individual, whose least word preoccupied Germany for years, and who only the other day left off dying by inches upon his “mattress-grave” in the Rue d'Amster-

dam,— of him we should without France have known nothing. Consequently the *real* Heinrich Heine must be sought for far more beneath the shade of the column of the Place Vendôme, than beneath that of the Linden-Allée of Berlin, and to give an accurate notion of the gradual *infiltration* of the French spirit into this Teutonic poet-polemist, no work can at all equal the one now before us, — *Lutèce*.

Lutèce is not, as some critics have thought proper to call it, a “daguerreotype” of the political and social scenes exhibited by France under the reign of Louis Philippe; for a daguerreotype is the mere reflection of an object, which object borrows nothing from the surface that reflects it, — whereas the picture in question owes half its value to the medium through which it becomes manifest. *Lutèce* is France, — nay, France very faithfully mirrored; but it is France mirrored in Heine, and your attention is enchained to the object reflected and to the reflecting medium at once. If it were not Heine that spoke them, you would, however true, find much less to interest you in the words that are spoken, and many of the judgments acquire their sole importance from the quality of the judge.

More than twelve years have gone by since the latest of these letters was written; fifteen or sixteen have elapsed since, in the *Augsburger Zeitung*, the first of them appeared; and there is a species of solemn curiosity in their attraction. They are as it were a prophecy of the past. As you refer to the date, you cannot help recurring also to the fact that this “conjurer Merlin,” as he somewhere styles himself, was walking about among ordinary people with this magic mirror always before him, and clearly seeing what to you and your purblind brethren was invisible. What guessed our countrymen and countrywomen, when they were presented to Louis Philippe in the Hall of Marshals at the Tuileries, of the tottering foundations of the whole governmental edifice? Or, when they flocked to Colonel Thorn’s aristocratic *fêtes*, and thought how fine a thing was an “old noblesse,” — provided, like danger, it no longer was and only had been! — what guessed they of the fire that smouldered beneath the soil, and was soon to burst forth in flames, whirling away, in a cloud of smoke and

soot, king, throne, aristocratic *fêtes*, "old noblesse," Colonel Thorn, and all? *They* said nothing, neither did the Parisians, who were divided into two classes: those inflated with satisfaction and those inflated with disgust,—the optimists and the pessimists,—those to whose minds nothing could go better, and those to whose minds nothing could go worse, for to the latter stability was the direst evil of all. All saw nothing, and yet here was a man rubbing elbows with them upon the Boulevards who discerned the black point upon the horizon,—saw far—years far away into the future; and, giving shape to his dreams, sent them, "nothing extenuated," to Germany, where they lived out their day, were read, commented upon, and not profited by. And there they are now, staring us in the face, solemnly curious, as we said before, and only to be designated as a Prophecy of the Past!

When Heine first came to Paris, the ground was still hot under his feet, so that what lava had been thrown up by the eruption of 1830 he was in time to study and appreciate. In a very short time the soil was made to look so uncommonly smooth, the fissures were so closed up, the dust and ashes so swept away, that a more than casual observer might easily have been deceived, and have really adopted the credence, that "an impossible *régime* had merely been replaced by the best of all possible governments," and that all was for ever for the best. But the exiled author of the *Reisebilder* came in time to see the beginning. He watched the "putting in order" of the whole, and built his apprehensions of the future upon his experience of the past. He is there before the rising of the curtain, and sees the actors dress. So, it may be said, did the French people themselves; but the French people forget everything, and are incapable to-day of remembering what were yesterday's events. "Forgiveness," says Heine, speaking of them, "is a ready virtue in the French, because it is a form of forgetfulness. Lucky, perhaps! for if they did not forget so easily, they would infallibly all fall to cutting one another's throats; for scarce a man exists here [in Paris] who has not some cause of mortal hatred towards another, if he did but remember it!"

It was, therefore, of no use to the French nation that it

should have witnessed the beginnings of its affairs and of its men; it had already forgotten both, and took men and things for what they looked like at the moment. But Heine, with his German tenacity, lost no impression he had once received, and deduced the present from the past, and the future from both, aided therein as much by his memory as by his poetic instinct.

If ever human affairs resembled a colossal game at whist with a *dummy*, they were the affairs of France during the eighteen years of Louis Philippe's reign. "Dummy" was the nation, and was alternately the partner of Guizot, of Thiers, and of the king, when he played against both; but the entire epoch is explicable only from the point of view of the perpetual struggle for supremacy between the king and the Chamber of Deputies on the one hand, and on the other between Thiers and Guizot *in* that Chamber.

"M. Guizot or M. Thiers!" exclaims Heine in one of his early letters. "Small enough is the political importance of the question as to which of the two the king likes most, or *least*. He will *make use* of one or of the other, according as he wants either this one or that; and he will only do so *then*, neither sooner nor later. I really cannot affirm which of these two statesmen is the most agreeable or disagreeable to him. I believe he has a strong distaste for both, and that from professional jealousy, esteeming himself more of a minister than either, and dreading the possibility of a greater degree of political capacity being attributed to these two personages than to himself. It has sometimes been said that Guizot suits him better than Thiers, because he enjoys a certain unpopularity that is far from displeasing to the king. But then, again, Guizot's puritanical semblances, his ever-watchful pride, his dogmatic, doctoral tone, and his harsh Calvinistic outside, assuredly do not fascinate Louis Philippe. In Thiers he has the contrary of all this,—an easy air that is close upon levity, an uncurbed boldness of temper, and caprices of sincerity and frankness, almost offensive to his own tortuous and hermetically sealed up nature. So that, after all, M. Thiers's qualities are not very likely to charm his Majesty. But above and beyond all must be considered the king's love of talking! He willingly lends himself to gossip that nothing can stay or stop, which is the more astonishing, since generally those who dissimulate habitually are taciturn, and avoid wasting their words. Consequently, Guizot cannot fail of being vexatious to him, for his

habit is to launch forth into dissertations, and, when he has proved his *thesis*, to listen to the king's answer in silent coldness; nay, going even so far sometimes as to *encourage* his royal interlocutor by an approving nod or sign, as though he had before him a schoolboy, who deserved praise for the correct recital of his task. With M. Thiers, however, Louis Philippe is perhaps still less at his ease, for here is a man who does not let him speak at all, hurried away as he is in the whirlpool of his own talk! M. Thiers's phrases flow on unceasingly, like the wine from a cask that has been unbunged; but the wine is exquisite, no doubt. Whilst Thiers is busy talking, no man alive can edge in a word, and the only chance is, as I have been assured, to surprise him when he is shaving. When the razor's point is at his throat, he holds his tongue and listens to other men." — pp. 16, 17 (Feb. 25, 1840).

No one, we should be inclined to say, of all the gravest historians and political portrait-painters of France, has so admirably delineated the two men in whose persons Political France was incarnate during the monarchy of July, and whose antagonism may be said to be the history of its vicissitudes and of its fall. The reason is, perhaps, that Heine was himself not a politician, and put no spirit of party, no passion, into his judgments. Heine is an artist and a poet, and on his study of statesmen brings to bear all his poet's power of divination, and all the appreciative spirit of the artist; but there is no predetermined bias: he is critical, essentially so, never passionate, whether for or against. This would not be the case if Thiers and Guizot were German politicians, or if they were artists. If, instead of playing upon the three hundred and odd Deputies of the Palais Bourbon, they had exercised themselves upon piano-forte or violin, you would soon see the difference in Heinrich Heine, and how he would soar into enthusiasm for the one, or sink the other down into a bottomless pit of confusion. But, politicians merely, and in a foreign country,—what was there in them to disturb the equilibrium of his intellect? Nothing. He saw clearly, dispassionately, disinterestedly, and, as we again say, he has left of French statesmen about the most valuable likenesses we know. This justice of the appreciative sense, this truth in criticism, distinguishes Heine nowhere save when he

touches upon France and Frenchmen; and when he touches upon these, it distinguishes no one as it does him. One slight instance will serve as a proof. One of the best accredited popular convictions was that of the venality and corruption of M. Thiers. The French mind was made up as to the types of the two men who divided the opinion of the country: Guizot was a pedagogue, and Thiers was a prodigal; but to attempt to gainsay or even modify the public notion touching the weakness of the latter in regard to money, was a thing the "enlightened public" would not stand. It knew what it was saying and what it was about, and it was a sheer piece of impertinence to contradict it upon this point. M. Guizot was unpleasant, but M. Thiers was unprincipled. "Everybody" said so, "everybody" had proofs of the thing; it was notorious, and it was as easy in 1840 to say or even think the contrary, as it would have been in 1640 to conceive that two thousand individuals should be transported from Paris to Versailles in half an hour by the force of a tea-kettle. Nevertheless, at this very date we find Heine doing justice to the man whom somebody called a "Mirabeau-mouche," and, if not raising his voice, drawing his pen in favor of an opinion which has since become so general in France, that no one recollects the period when he had it not and resolutely refused to have it. There was no courage in what Heine did in all this, but there was considerable discernment. Heine never was brave, but he was perspicacious. There was no courage, because in the first place his letters were, among many others, anonymous in the *Augsburger Zeitung*, and unread by any one in France. But if there was no courage in the matter, there was no corruption; for he gained nothing by what he did not avow even to those who were benefited by it. We must not quite forget either under what circumstances Heine wrote these letters to the most conservative and most intensely *German* organ of all the German press. From 1840 to 1848 the object of all Germany's strongest hate was precisely M. Thiers, who was regarded from the Rhine to the Spree as the reviver of the old Bonapartist and foreign policy,—as the man whose chief desire was to attach his name to the re-conquest of the Franco-

Rhenish frontier. Thiers was the representative of the excessive, of the *ultra-national* spirit in France, at the identical moment when the form affected by that spirit was thought beyond the Rhine to be an offensive and a menacing one for Germany, and when amongst Germans the same shape was assumed by Patriotism that had already been assumed in 1813. At this period of effervescence it was that the author of the *Reisebilder* undertook the assuredly not easy task of being impartial and just to the head of the cabinet formed on the 1st of March, 1840.

"If Guizot is poor as a church-rat," he exclaims on one occasion, "his rival is every bit as poor, as I have told you over and over again. That History of the Empire he is writing, — rely upon it, he writes it with a view to the money it will bring him in, and that *he absolutely wants*. Well, after all, it is a glorious thing to think that the two men who have administered the entire fortune of France are two poor *mandarins*,* whose sole wealth is confined to their brains." — p. 233.

It would trouble Heine, or any one else, to award the same meed of praise to the administrators of the public fortune in France now-a-days, and whilst wallowing in riches acquired by all or any means, the "brains" of French statesmen since 1851 are probably the very last place where it would be worth while to look for wealth of any kind.

"It is a gross calumny to represent Thiers gambling at the *Bourse*," says our German narrator; "and it is a calumny almost as silly as it is infamous. No man obeys more than one great passion, and your ambitious souls are disdainful of money. But Thiers himself gives rise to all these inventions by his perpetual familiarity with adventurers of all sorts, who, when he suddenly turns his back upon them, abuse him much more grievously than do any of his political foes. In Heaven's name, why does he consort with such wretches? No one has a right to complain † of fleas, if he will lie down side by side with dirty dogs!"

* This word is used, because throughout this letter Heine supposes the two statesmen in question to be Chinese mandarins, and ministers to the sovereign of the Celestial Empire.

† A remarkable instance of this was furnished by M. Thiers's behavior to the famous Dr. Véron, when he left no stone unturned to obtain the renewal of his contract with the government, as Director of the Grand Opera. M. Thiers (then

It is probably from a strong sense of the inconvenience of the companions and instruments of whom it would seem difficult for statesmen in France to keep clear, that, upon M. Thiers's retirement from office, to make way for his rival, Guizot, (October, 1840,) Heine exclaims :—

“What mud! what mud!! Now that he has left the Hotel of the Ministry in the Rue des Capucines and got back to his own house, Place Saint George, the first thing I advise Thiers to do is to *take a bath*. Once there, he may show himself to his friends as he really is, and people must end by confessing that there is no stain on his name, and that his hands have remained pure from any bribe.” *

Our readers must not, however, fancy that, because Heine is just towards M. Thiers upon one point, he is unjust upon others, or that he repels what was in fact an unfounded and short-lived calumny from any excessive or voluntarily blind admiration. No. He sees the man as we believe he really was, and is, and the fact of his not joining in an accusation based upon nothing more than party spirit does not prevent him from perceiving the minutest openings for ridicule of the individual he defends.

“What is that you say?” ejaculates Heine, in a rage of con-

minister) was perfectly frank, and, we believe, opposed the following objections to “the Doctor”:—“I can’t and won’t renew your *Privilege*; because you have made too much money by it already. With the reputation my enemies have thought proper to give me, I should be looked upon as the accomplice of your luck. I positively *will not* give you the continuation of the managership of the Opera.” M. Thiers, being one of the rare political men who in France *dare* to utter the word “*No!*” kept his word, and drew down upon himself the determined dislike of the lively Doctor, who, some persons say, wrote his *Mémoires d'un Bourgeois de Paris* only to be revenged upon the minister who would not meet all his expectations.

* There is now no obstacle to the general persuasion that M. Thiers was in reality, as far as regarded himself, not corrupt; but few men have perhaps held others to be less honest. It was difficult, too, that it should be otherwise, considering the men he had to deal with, as Heine justly remarks. One day, whilst he was Minister for Foreign Affairs, he opened the drawers of his bureau, and showed to the highest judicial functionary in the realm bank-notes, heaps of Napoleons, and rouleaux of five-franc pieces, adverting to that as being the portion of the secret service money he had to distribute right and left. The legal dignitary in question expressed some surprise at “even five-franc pieces being of use.” M. Thiers smiled with bitter scornfulness. “Even five-franc pieces!” he echoed. “I assure you, that, with many of those I have to treat with, I often regret the absence of small change!”

tempt against the correspondent of some other German newspaper, — “what! ‘*un petit Napoleon*’! He, Thiers, a ‘little Napoleon’! A little Gothic cathedral forsooth! it is the very *size* of the thing that astounds us! Take its colossal proportions from a cathedral,” (Heine has eternally that of Cologne in his mind’s eye, it haunts him,) “make a miniature of it, and what shall then impress us? The cleverness of M. Thiers — his *esprit* — surpasses the intelligence of all who are around him. In sharp-wittedness he has the upper hand of every one. His is the best head in France, though he says so himself who should not say it. Nay, during the ministerial crisis of last year, did not he declare to the king, that, however sharp his Majesty might think himself, there was in France some one sharper still, who was simply he himself, M. Thiers? Upon which, — ‘No, no! M. Thiers,’ replied Louis Philippe; ‘if it were really so, you would not say it!’ How long will he endure? Has he not already almost worked himself out? See his head whitened before its time! Assuredly not a black hair is to be found upon it, and the *arrogance* of that health of his must be yielding fast. The very rapidity of his movements is of itself positively terrific, and makes one uneasy. However light and restless other Frenchmen may be, compared to Thiers they seem so many ponderous Germans.”

Heine, as he says himself, is a furious Bonapartist, and upon this subject he will tolerate no pretension of M. Thiers, or M. Thiers’s admirers. He will have no “diamond edition” of his hero, no Titan seen through the diminishing end of the glass, no imitation, no *contrefaçon* of the genuine Napoleon; and here he shows himself tender towards none of the affectations of his *protégé* (for, there is no denying it, M. Thiers *is* Heine’s *protégé* throughout every page of this curious book). Part of his sympathy for what D’Israeli would probably call “the little man in the Place St. George,” as he called Sir Robert Peel “the gentleman in Downing Street,” comes from the circumstance of M. Thiers’s undeniable Bonapartism; but when M. Thiers goes further than admiration, when he dreams himself into the gray coat and cocked hat of his heroic model, when he turns general and emperor, then Heine goes to work to “bring him down,” and we gain thereby such sketches as the following:—

“Thiers is full of leanings towards Imperialism, and, as I told you last July, the idea of war makes the joy of his heart. Why, at this

very hour, the floor of his study is all covered with a geographical carpet of maps; and there he is himself, sprawling about it at full length, and busy digging black and green pins into the paper, for all the world as if he were Napoleon!" — p. 130.

But Heine does not always take this tone of pleasantry, and, scattered through the glittering spangles of his wit, you may often pick up bits of gold, pure, solid, and without alloy. In the midst of pictures the only aim of which seems to be the provocation of the reader's hilarity, you are arrested by sentences that evince the entire possession of the subject he is treating, and the profoundest knowledge of human nature, as well in general as in its particular manifestations. For instance, when describing M. Thiers, after the fall of his ministry in October, 1840, he observes:—

"He is, perhaps, a trifle graver, though the want of *real* gravity has never been his defect; he has plenty of it, but it lies hidden under appearances of levity." — p. 132.

Never was a truer word spoken; but to arrive at the affirmation of an opinion so repugnant to popular prejudice required no ordinary amount of conviction and of perspicacity of judgment. There is also a prodigious amount of *clairvoyance*, as the sequel has shown, in the following appreciation of M. Guizot.

"As for him," observes Heine, "the victory of the *Bourgeoisie* is in his mind secured, and he has put all his faculties into the service of this new power. . . . He evinces all the qualities of the true *doctrinaire*, who never fails to find a doctrine by which he *proves* all he does. He knows too much, and is by far too intelligent, not to be a sceptic at bottom; but his scepticism is of a kind that is easily conciliated with the devotion he has to *his system*. Just now he is the faithful servant of the *Bourgeoisie*, and he will defend his idea to the last inexorably, and with the harshness of a Duke of Alva. He does not hesitate. He knows what he wants at the present hour. Why, even if he were to fall, his very *fall* would not *shake* him; he would shrug his shoulders, for after all *he is personally utterly indifferent to the thing he is fighting for*. Nay, if ever by strange hazard victory should tumble into the hands of the Republicans or Communists, I would strongly advise those excellent weak-witted individuals to get hold of Guizot for their minister, and make the utmost of his intelli-

gence and of his obstinacy; they may rely upon it that he will be better worth to them than confiding their fates to the purest and most virtuous citizen of their own sect. And I would just give the same advice to the *Henricinquistes*, in the case that they should, *par impossible*, be restored one day to power. Take Guizot, in God's name, for your minister, and the chances are that you will last three times twenty-four hours longer. I fancy I am not belying M. Guizot when I affirm that he would not require to do great violence to his internal opinions in order to come to the assistance of your wretched cause, and help you with his eloquence and his governing ability. Do you suppose he is not as indifferent to you as he is to the whole host of the cheese-mongers in whose behalf he is wasting such loads of energy and talent?—not as indifferent to you as he is to the '*system*' of the king that he is upholding with such stoical determination?"

Yes, alas! those words speak the truth, and very nearly the whole truth. More wanting in political conviction than it is credible a political man should be,—less impressed with the notion of the usefulness of Truth and the advantage of the Right than it is admissible a clever man should be,—M. Guizot rendered inevitable the downfall of the monarchy of July, (though he did not hasten it,) by the hard and narrow way in which he practised a system he neither cared for nor had invented, and by the cold-blooded determination with which he wedded himself to institutions in which he had no faith. But what Henri Heine did not appear to foresee was, that, if Guizot fell, the king must fall with him. He had, little by little, brought things to such a pass, that he could no longer be detached from the monarchical and parliamentary edifice, as it had grown to present itself to the eyes of the French nation.

"He does not know how to come down from the high mast of power," says Heine, speaking of Guizot. "Whilst Thiers, who is agile as a monkey in getting to the top of this greasy *Mât de Cocagne*, is still more ready to slip down from it again, and jump among the admiring crowd full of smiles, ease, and elasticity, Guizot neither climbs up nor comes down in the same way. He hoists himself up so heavily, and with such outrageous efforts of strength, that one unavoidably thinks of a bear scaling a wall to get at a honey-pot; but *when* he is at the top, he digs his strong paws vigorously in, and desperate is then the endeavor to get him down again. Perhaps he has not the

easy knack of descending possessed by his smart rival, and, once 'in,' it may require a positive commotion to get him 'out' of his high place."

This was just what it *did* require; and to shake down M. Guizot from the tree to whose topmost branches he had clambered, that earthquake, the Revolution of February, was not found to be too much. But then the tree fell with him, and, the minister overthrown, scarce anything remained to show where royalty had stood. But how could it be otherwise, if you watch attentively the beginnings? Oak-trees do not spring from cherry-stones, and no enterprise (not that even of attempting to fill with water a bottomless tub) is more utterly hopeless, than that which consists in expecting fruit other than its own to come from the seed you have sown. The one marked characteristic of the entire period known under the name of "The Government of July," namely, the period from 1830 to 1848, is want of conviction. It is universal. Every man and every thing is distinguished by it, and the one only point on which the faith of the whole nation rests is, that the whole nation believes in the possibility of doing without belief. Constitutionalists do not believe in Constitutions, nor Soldiers in Glory, nor Poets even in Poetry; the men who adapted Louis Philippe to the throne, and the throne to Louis Philippe, believe neither in Louis Philippe nor in the throne; and when they talk of "the best of all republics," they do not believe one word of all they are saying, neither does the king himself. The whole was a mistake; and the only reality to which it gave birth, and which destroyed and outlived it, was what is vulgarly called "*La Blague*," that ignoble term for which no other language has an equivalent, — that villanous symbol of France, who, as Heine too truly says, "is at this epoch of her history more aptly represented by Robert Macaire than by anything else."

It is not too much to say that the beginnings of the establishment of the July monarchy amply presaged all this. Let our readers but just take the trouble to ponder over the following reflections of an eyewitness:—

"Louis Philippe is a great king, though he is less like Ajax than Ulysses. Louis Philippe has by no means filched the crown of France,

like a pickpocket. Alas, no! he became king by the direst of necessities,—by the *disgrace* much more than by the *grace* of God, who placed upon his head a crown of thorns in a terrible hour of need. He has, without a doubt, been play-acting ever since. His intentions undoubtedly were *not* sincere towards his constituents, the heroes of July, but neither were theirs towards him. They looked upon him as a mere *marionnette*, and put him on a crimson chair, in the notion that they could easily push him off it again if he refused to obey the wires by which they held him, or if they took it into their heads to perform once more their old play of the Republic. But this time Junius Brutus was enacted by Royalty, and the Republicans began by being caught. Louis Philippe was cunning enough to assume the heaviest mask of simplicity, and to go walking through the streets of Paris with his sentimental umbrella under his arm, shaking to right and to left the ill-washed hands of citizens *Creti* and *Pleti*, smiling soft smiles, and apparently deeply moved. To be sure it *was* a strange part he played; and when I arrived in Paris just after the Revolution of July, I had more than one occasion for a hearty laugh. I shall always remember how, immediately upon my arrival, I hurried off to the *Palais Royal* to see Louis Philippe. The friend who guided and accompanied me said I had come rather too late for the real fun; for that the king now only came out at certain hours upon the Terrace, whereas till within the last week or so he had been always to be seen for five francs! ‘For five francs?’ I exclaimed. ‘Do you mean that he actually —’ My friend laughed. ‘No!’ said he, interrupting me; ‘*he* does not *show himself*, but he *is shown* for money’; and he proceeded to describe to me the process, which was as follows. A set of *claqueurs*, ticket-sellers at the theatres, and others of the same sort, had been in the habit of showing the king to foreigners for the sum of five francs; and they used to add, that for *ten* he might be seen raising his eyes to heaven, and putting his hand upon his heart as a pledge of the purity of his intentions; whilst for twenty he might be heard to sing the *Marseillaise*! For five francs this company of industrials used to raise murmurs and shouts of joyful applause under the king’s windows, upon which his Majesty was wont to appear, and, after bowing graciously, retired to his apartments. For ten francs these rascallions made such a row, and went into such convulsions of rapture when the king came forth, that he could do no less than raise his eyes to heaven, and put his hand upon his heart, according to their programme. But many English sight-seers did in reality give twenty francs, and then the paroxysm of enthusiasm knew no bounds; the crowd cheered and roared, the king was ‘had out’; but when he came,

his loyal subjects bellowed the *Marseillaise* with such discordant energy, that — probably to put an end to the infernal din — the king joined in the chorus, and gave the audience enough for their money, by raising his eyes to heaven, clapping his hand upon his heart, and singing the *Marseillaise* all in one !”

Now this was the form of popular effervescence immediately on the elevation of Louis Philippe to the throne, and if not the only true, it was at all events the most prolific, source of public feeling in France. Insincerity grew to be the reigning characteristic of everything in a country where no one was in earnest, or could fancy his neighbor to be so. When upon this unsteady foundation M. Guizot, with his hard, heavy hand, — instead of a shed, a booth, or anything equally light and provisional, easy to be put up, and easy to be taken down, — persisted in building up a fabric of stone, of course it fell in, having nothing to rest upon, and of course it was swamped, seeing that the ground was marshy, treacherous, and hollow. M. Guizot knew the state of the case as well as any one else ; but he had dogmatized so long, and, as he thought, so well, about “the exigencies of constitutional government,” that, untruth not being instinctively repugnant to his mind, he had grown to admit the possibility of two parallel lines being able to enclose a space, of solidity being independent of substance, and of a number more of such fallacies, which made him dangerous exactly in proportion as he was ready to put his obstinate will into the service of his delusion.

Society at large, as well as the merely political portion of it, was infected by the deteriorating principle of unbelief. People did not believe in the Freedom for offending which they were supposed to have chased the elder Bourbons from France ; nor did they, as we have seen, believe in the sincerity of the citizen-king they were averred to have chosen in his place. They believed in him neither as “king” nor as “citizen,” nor did they believe they had chosen him. No one believed in virtue, or in the sacredness of family ties ; they first denied that virtue *was*, and next, supposing it even to be, they denied that it was beautiful ; they admitted nothing righteous and felt nothing pleasing in the gentle relationships resulting from hallowed bonds. The art and literature of

the epoch will bear ample testimony to this. The heroes of Victor Hugo, George Sand, and Alexandre Dumas will be our proofs. *Antony*, interesting *because* he had no legitimate birth or name; *Marion Delorme*, charming *because* she had been a courtesan; *Jacques* and his brethren, hateful merely *because* they are the lawful husbands of their wives;—these, with a hundred others, their inevitable consequences, are the proofs of the perverted social sense. “*La Blague!*” we repeat it, *there* is the sovereign of the hour, reigning from the very top to the very bottom of the entire social scale, and giving the whole nation but one employment and one desire, *to scoff*. Why, when Frederic le Maitre played *Robert Macaire*, did he give to his infamous hero the striking, the unmistakable semblance of the king? Was it because Louis Philippe was really a bad or a dishonest man? Not at all; he neither was so, nor did the country at that time (in 1831–32) pretend to think him so. But he was a type of existing society,—the completest, highest expression of what was in cant phrase called *la haute*. He was *le roi de la Blague*, and no one was in earnest with him, nor he with any one. That was why, during all the run of *Robert Macaire*, the two types became confounded, and why also, ten or twelve years later, when the king had got to fancy himself more assured, when he had got to be in earnest with himself,—*se prendre au sérieux*, as the French say,—and when Frederic then wanted to renew the same joke, and, in Balzac’s play of *Vautrin* reappeared on the stage as like the king as pea to pea, the curtain was dropped, the actor obliged to change his costume, and the piece forbidden after the first night. But *Robert Macaire* remained the national type; and our German author is so intimately persuaded of this sad fact, that he discovers what he styles *Macairianisme* even in the popular chorography of France, which he declares to be nothing but the *pantomime* of it.

“The foreigner,” says Heine, “who possesses a just idea of this fearful type, or even an approximate notion thereof, will then comprehend these indescribable dances, these *danced* (not acted) mockeries, that throw ridicule, not only upon the relationships between woman and man, but upon social relationships of all sorts, upon whatever is good or fair,

upon every kind of enthusiasm, upon patriotism and fidelity, upon probity, good faith, the holy bonds of family union, upon heroism, religion, — upon everything in short. I cannot help the unspeakable sadness that seizes me when I mark the Parisian people *amusing* themselves in their habitual resorts. Above all, when I happen to be a witness to the masquerading mania of the Carnival, which carries the frenzy of pleasure to a positively demoniacal extent. I declare that I was almost *terrified* the other night at one of the *fêtes* given at the *Opera Comique*. Of a certainty, Beelzebub presided over the orchestra, and whilst the music of his myrmidons tore the anguished ear, the *piercing* lights of the gas burned the tortured eye. Oh ! surely this was the very valley of the lost ones, of which the old nursery tales tell ; and the witches danced as in our legends of the *Brocken*, beautiful some of them in their viciousness, and adorned with the grace that never wholly leaves these she-demons of Frenchwomen. But how to describe the final *galop*, heralded in by the blare of its trumpets, — setting in movement the whole crowd of human creatures ! The devilish row was at its height of madness ; one would have thought that the ceiling would fall in, and that, by the rent in the roof, all the infernal assembly would fly off upon broomsticks, upon fire-tongs, upon pitchforks, upon huge wooden ladles, or upon men-faced goats or goat-faced men ; and that, once mounted upon the vile instruments of locomotion of the witches' Sabbath, they would vanish with cries, shouts, and blasphemous vociferations."

Now it must not be forgotten that this but too natural impression of one of the most hideous scenes that can well be conceived, is produced upon a man whom fame describes as anything but "nice" in his morality, and of whose character neither prudish scruples nor scruples of any kind were a distinguishing element. Yet his disgust is neither mitigated nor mistakable, and its expression is worth chronicling ; for this subject of a people's pleasures is never, in any country, an indifferent one. Enjoyment, like wine, induces the real, intimate nature to become manifest ; and if the people of Paris were to be judged in their hours of amusement, the opinion formed of them, if severe, would probably be exceedingly just. The people of "July," 1830, if studied in their pleasures, might perhaps to an observer furnish already the clew to the people of February, 1848. A proof of the importance really inherent in these outward testimonials of the popular joy is

found in the importance attached to them by a philosopher of the species of Heine, nothing "nice," as we have already remarked, or overstrained as to delicacy. He is worth quoting upon this subject of the popular dances of Modern France, and we think our readers on this side of the Atlantic will not complain of our disinclination to abandon this portion of Heine's *Lutèce*; for he paints admirably much that has been neglected by other limners, taken for granted by national sketchers, not understood by foreigners, and yet is necessary to the complete appreciation of the race whose grandfathers were our allies.

Perhaps, if we were to look for a cause of the moral degradation of much too large a proportion of the French lower orders, — a degradation it is unfortunately impossible to deny, — we might discover it in the general prevalence of the darkest ignorance. We believe *want of education* to be the root of every evil in France; and as to the FACT of the want, it is not too much to say, that the thirty-five millions of inhabitants of the French empire — *less* (not *worse*) educated than the population of any other European country — are deficient in instruction in precisely the proportion in which they are capable of receiving it. Leaving on one side the population of the provinces, and confining ourselves to that of "the brain of France," Paris, we have no hesitation in saying, that, whilst the educational level there is decidedly lower than that of any other great European city, the merely intellectual level is naturally the very highest of all. The perceptive powers of the individual are, in all classes of the Parisian population (but *especially in the lowest class*), not only keener than in any other similar aggregation of human beings, but they are far earlier developed. It would, we should say, not be at all extravagant to maintain, that what a boy or girl of German or English or Italian or Spanish race is at fourteen, a Parisian child of either sex is at nine; consequently, what may be called the absorbent quality is wholly out of proportion with what is given it to absorb. It hungers, and then preys upon itself, producing an unmistakably unhealthy state.

The one leading characteristic of a French child, or adult, is distrust; the one irreparable disgrace is "to be taken in."

The only remedy for such a dire possibility is a preventive one, — *Disbelief*. Every man and woman grows up with the firm resolve *not to be duped*, and, to insure this end, refuses faith to every person and every thing, beginning with his or her own self. Of course, the desire to turn into ridicule what there is a determination not to respect, is one of the first temptations; the national wit aiding, *to scoff* becomes a habit of the intelligence, and *La Blague* is hailed as the sovereign power that guards against every deception. Now Heine is perhaps right. In their dances the people of Paris, more than even in their literature, glorify *La Blague*, and the world-famous *Cancon* is more directly the medium through which the scoffing Mephistophelian spirit becomes manifest, than even the most impious melodrama of the so-called *Boulevard du Crime*.

"The *cancon*!" exclaims Heine. "Now to describe it, let this be remembered: the inferior classes, whatever may be their ardor in imitating the great world, have never been able to submit to an imitation of its sulky, tiresome way of dancing. The dances of the people are full of life, — unhappily, they are sometimes *too lively*; and if I positively *must* describe the *cancon*, I can only do so by saying that it is a chorographic exercise which almost inevitably subjects the gentlemen and ladies who devote themselves to it to be seized by the *sergent de ville*, and requested to make themselves scarce! These few words will suffice to show that the *virtue*, without which old Vestris used to declare no man could be a first-rate dancer, is not necessarily requisite for the performance of the *cancon*, since that species of chorography forces the people of Paris, in their hours of wildest joy, to be incommoded by the armed intervention of the state."

Upon this humiliating obligation, the author of the *Reisebilder* most justly observes: —

"One of the public scandals and abuses that most shock a stranger is to see glum, sour-visaged agents of authority frowning at the popular pleasures, and mounting guard over dancing morality. Alas! to my sense, the public morals gain vastly little by accustoming the government to domineer over and bully so ostentatiously the amusements of the people; the forbidden fruit is far more attractive than any other, and the expedients devised by this naturally sharp and witty race for eluding the active censure of the police produce effects far worse than anything that could result from the explosion of the brutish, popular

instincts, if allowed to pass unnoticed. This close watchfulness of the pastimes of the lower class characterizes, however, supremely well the social state of France at the present day, and proves what are the limits within which the French nation has achieved the conquest of liberty."

This last remark is singularly well timed, and well applied, and brings us back to the idea we put forth at the commencement of these pages; namely, that the great merit of Henri Heine's *Lutèce* is not only that it is France very faithfully mirrored, but that it is "France mirrored in Heine."

In truth, the application of the judgments he records derives its chief importance from the quality of the individual who applies them. If Heine were other than what he is, his impressions would lose half their value; but it is because *he*, being what he is, is so impressed, that it is worth our while to study the effect thus made, and to remount to its cause. Here, on the one hand, we have a German born and bred,—a man whose very years have each been added one to the other under the constant pressure of petty tyranny, for whom the subserviency of one portion of the population to another was an old story,—yet who is offended by the inborn slavishness of nature preserved in France after two revolutions. On the other hand, this same man comes before us as a thinker, a philosopher, held to be singularly free from all prejudices, whether in the order of things human or divine, and whom the cynicism of France disgusts; who is shocked by the total godlessness, the incapacity of enthusiasm, the instinctive *disrespectfulness* of the generation, whole and entire. Here is, to our mind, the double interest of the work. It interests us from the facts it chronicles, and from the meaning attached to them by the chronicler. Besides this, too, it is a marvellously impartial work, and every page shows that no tenderness for any preconceived notion or for any party can induce the writer to sacrifice or even disguise the truth. Heine is stigmatized as a Republican by the Conservatives and Royalists, as a Jacobin and *Sans-culotte* by the Legitimists; yet he does justice to all, and some of the hardest knocks the Republicans ever received were dealt them by the author of *Atta Troll*. He sees all the defects of the governmental armor of Louis Philippe, all the anomalies and weaknesses, all the falseness

and sterility, of the so-called *régime* of July; yet he hesitates not to mark every favorable circumstance that occurs, and deals with incomparable fairness and good faith towards the king and towards the government, in which, nevertheless, he cannot bring himself to believe. Perhaps contemporary history has no pages more conscientious or more impressive than those consecrated by Heine to the death of the unfortunate Duc d'Orleans, and the sudden (and short-lived) change wrought by it in the popular feeling towards the king.

"The consternation of yesterday," he writes in July, 1842, "is not to be depicted, and the Parisians, by one sudden, unforeseen death, have acquired the instant knowledge of how uncertain are all the social institutions of this country, and of what danger may attend upon the slightest shock. If the Duc d'Orleans had been killed a few days earlier, Paris would not have returned two conservative Deputies for *twelve* opposition members, and have given, by the incalculable force of that act, an incalculable impetus to the social movement of the country. This frightful accident puts once more everything in question in the existing order of things, and it will be lucky if the settlement of the Regency in the event of the king's death can pass through the Deputies' Chamber without something disagreeable happening. This Regency debate will take up the *Chambre* entirely, and, alas! lend words to conflicting passions. And even should all go by smoothly, the least we can expect is an interregnum, always serious, but more particularly serious in a country whose institutions are shaky as they are in France. Alas for the king! They say he shows the most surprising strength of mind and resolution, although for several weeks past he has been unaccountably depressed, troubled even with vague presentiments of evil. If I am to believe what is told, he wrote lately to Thiers a letter full of ideas of death, but adverting to his *own* death,* not dreaming of that of his son. The poor Duc d'Orleans was really loved, — adored almost, — in all classes. The news of his death has fallen upon every one like a clap of thunder from an unclouded sky. Affliction is everywhere. Yesterday, at two o'clock, the low, vague murmur of a disaster was heard at the *Bourse*, where the funds went down three

* Heine (*Lutèce*, p. 21) tells the following curious anecdote: "The Duc d'Orleans has melancholy moments sometimes, during which he relates that his aunt, the Duchesse d'Angoulême, foretold to him a sudden and premature death, when she met the young prince, as he was on his road to Paris, whence she was flying, in July, 1830." This letter is dated February, 1840.

frances ; but no one would credit the report. The prince did not in fact die till four o'clock, and till that hour the news of his death was contradicted by hundreds. At five o'clock, doubt was still obstinately entertained, but when at six a broad strip of white paper was pasted across every play-bill, to signify that each theatre was shut, the population, whole and entire, was forced to admit the horrible truth."

There is something extremely impressive in the manner in which Heine recounts the various effects produced by the untimely end of Ferdinand of Orleans upon various groups of society in France.

" Even the lower orders, even the populace, regret him ; and it was a touching sight to see the workingmen, who were employed in taking down the scaffoldings for the illuminations of the July *fêtes*, lying about upon rafters and boards, and deploring the shocking fate of the unfortunate young prince. A true and deep shade of sadness sat upon all their faces, and the mute discouragement of such as spake no word was the most heart-rending eloquence of all. Yet amongst these very men who mourned for the fallen prince, were many who at the tavern or *estaminet* vaunted the ardor of their pure republicanism ! "

And now, passing from the record of popular regret to that of regret in the higher ranks, we fall upon a page that is too characteristic to be left unnoticed. Let us mark the hours, as they pass upon that sad 13th of July. At two o'clock the prince is dashed from his carriage upon the pavement of Neuilly. Scarcely a quarter of an hour afterward, the men of money hear, divine, or create the evil news. The murmur is abroad, and a darkness gathers over Paris as the shade from the gigantic wing of a bird of ill omen. It is too horrible ! Impossible ! It is ardently denied. No one will believe it. Yet still the murmur grows, and the shade darkens, and five and six o'clock are struck from church-towers that are so soon to echo the death-knell. Fair women are borne laughing home from their drives in the Bois de Boulogne, not knowing that behind those very trees that have overshadowed them one has been destroyed whose destruction may presage that of nearly the whole land, and that the echo of their gayety might almost have mingled with the wail of the mother, the Hecuba of modern days ! They reach their own homes, those laughing ladies, adorn their fairness with fresh

flowers, swathe their beauty with tissues of woven air, and again they are borne on, softly cushioned, through the streets where lamplight, and what was so lately sunlight, begin to struggle over the waning day. They rattle up to the doors of the Opera, their horses prance and foam, and will unwillingly be stayed. But what awaits them now?

“Ah!” says our poet, “when these fairly adorned dames came bounding from their carriages on to the *Perron* of the Grand Opera, and saw before their eyes the doors that were not to uncloze, and heard with their affrighted ears the sad tale of what had happened upon that road called the *Chemin de la Révolte*, — ah! then indeed was there wail and lamenting amongst them all, and tears flowed from bright eyes, and naught was heard but sighs and sobs for the prince who, so young, so charming, had passed in one short hour from light to the darkness of death! Alas for the chivalrous heart! alas for the prince so intensely national, so French! Cut off in life’s flower, so brave and so serene! Alas that he, like the Adonis of mythology, should have seen his generous, pure blood flow away in the death-stream amidst the flowers of the spring-time! Here is the lot of the fair upon earth!”

At this moment the chronicler, foreseeing all that such an event must bring with it of hypocrisy, of littleness, of conventionality, breaks off in the midst of his dirge, angrily exclaiming:—

“And now, who knows, at this very hour, perhaps, whilst the people of France are full of real woe, whilst fair women and free men are weeping over the dead prince, — who knows whether at this hour official grief is not getting all its onions under its nose, whether Folly is not busy putting black crape round her cap and bells, whether the tragic tomfoolery is not just going to begin? O the tearful twaddle that is impending! O the wishy-washy flood of insincerity and sentimentalism! For aught I know, M. Laffitte himself may, at this identical moment, be off to Neuilly, and, breathless with emotion and the journey, be engaged in pressing the king upon his heart, whilst the entire opposition is wiping its eyes and blowing its nose in chorus! I would not swear that Chateaubriand may not be already astride upon his melancholy Pegasus, upon his winged Rosinante, and soaring into clouds of sonorous condolence over the queen! O grimace and hollow-seeming all!”

Nor does Heine forget, even at so solemn an hour, the in-

evitable presence of *La Blague*, — the strident laugh, the hiss, the scoff of the Mephistophelian spirit lying in wait in one corner of the dark scene.

"One step, — alas! too true, — there *is* but one step from the sublime to the ridiculous! As I said, yesterday, upon the Boulevards, at the theatre doors, in every place of public resort, the deplorable certainty was acquired, and group after group of talkers and orators was formed and laid violent hands upon public attention. Those who never were listened to before seized this as an opportunity, and poured forth all the untalked talk that was pent up in and suffocating them, in the form of recital, with God only knows what amplifications. Did not I hear one man, close to the entrance of the *Variétés*, declaiming, in allusion to the circumstance, the speech of Thérémene in *Phedre*: '*Il était sur son char*,' etc. !!!" *

In this circumstance Heine is full of real impartiality with regard to the king, and Louis Philippe's sincere distress and dignified bearing were never better appreciated.

"The king's firmness commands every one's respect. In this supreme adversity he shows himself really heroic. Broken-hearted, his intelligence remains invincible, and he works hard, day and night. His importance was never so deeply felt, for it is probable the peace of the world hangs upon his life. Bear up against thy weakness and thy wounds, unhappy king! Aged hero of peace, struggle on, struggle on! The king's misery has altered his nature for a time. His sufferings have made him silent, — him who loved so much to speak! The speech from the throne, the work of his own pen only, is simple to the last degree, and says what *must* be said alone. Louis Philippe mourns his son with an austerity almost republican. The reception at the Tuileries the other day was, in its silence, so deeply gloomy, that it had an almost supernatural aspect; mute, one thousand persons, and more, passed before the mute king, who, in his speechless sorrow, looked at them and bowed. The *Requiem* at Nôtre Dame is countermanded; for the royal father says he will have no music at his son's funeral, for that music recalls too nearly days of representation and re-

* This alludes to Racine's tragedy of *Phedre*, at the end of which, Thérémene, the confidant of Hyppolytus, recounts in a long speech the death of the young prince to his father Theseus. This speech, entitled *Le récit de Thérémene*, and beginning, "*Il était sur son char*," is known by heart probably by thirty out of the thirty-five millions of inhabitants of France, and was the standing butt for the shafts of ridicule of all the young *Romantic* school during their war against the "classics."

joining. It was rumored that Louis Philippe would take his grandson, the Comte de Paris, by the hand, and lead him to the Chamber of Deputies during the ceremony of the speech from the throne. A touching sight assuredly! But the king avoids all 'sights' and 'shows,' — the grief at his heart is too deep-seated, the whole is too *real*; there is no place for any scenic effect."

This was true; it was even the one great characteristic of the moment throughout the country. The shock was so sudden, the event so sad, the impression produced (perhaps from its very unexpectedness) so deep, that the French nation was for the moment in earnest, and ready instinctively to believe in itself and in others. Heine thinks this came from the natural kindness of the race.

"The national good-heartedness shows itself particularly with regard to Louis Philippe," he writes; "and his worst enemies even manifest most touchingly the interest wherewith his misfortune inspires them. I would almost venture to say that the king is positively popular. As I was looking yesterday before Nôtre Dame at the preparations for the funeral, and listening to the conversations of the populace around me, I heard, amongst others, the following *naïve* remark: 'The king might now walk about Paris on foot, without any fear; nobody would try to shoot him'!!!! (There is popularity for you!) The death of the Duc d'Orleans has regained for his father hearts that were the farthest estranged, and the conjugal tie between the king and the country has been consecrated anew by the great evil that has befallen both. But how long will this honeymoon of mourning, this black honeymoon, last?"

That was of a truth the question fit to be asked, and for once it strikes us that Henri Heine — affected as he necessarily was in the poetical part of himself by a disaster in which no portion of the poetic element failed — saw less sharply than he was wont to discern the political bearings of the event. It was perfectly true that the country, *for a moment*, mourned with the king, but the real reason of its mourning was one that in fact militated against the possibility of Louis Philippe's genuine popularity. The Duc d'Orleans had been *the hope* of the nation. Whilst he lived, his father was but a temporary inconvenience, even in the eyes of those who liked him least. His "ways," which all, save the mere, small, closely-packed

conservative majority cordially hated, were impatiently borne, yet constituted after all but "*un mauvais moment à passer*," as the French say, and for the future the prince royal was looked to with real confidence and real hope. Some there are, — nay, we might almost say many, — who said at the time, and who still persist in saying, that, had the Duc d'Orleans lived, the nation would have been cruelly disappointed; that the prince had all his father's defects, and less than the veteran king's ability; that he wanted the king's experience, and made up for it by no greater truthfulness or sincerity. This may or may not be true: it suffices that the nation generally did not believe it, and based upon the character it believed to be that of the heir to the throne hopes and previsions, ardent in proportion to the dissatisfaction afforded by the throne's actual possessor to all such sentiments. The natural consequence, of course, was, that the Duc d'Orleans's death broke the tie by which Louis Philippe's pretended skillfulness and the nation's patience were bound together. The nation might and did commiserate, — it might, and did, lose sight of the sovereign in the bereaved father; but this was momentary; and from the hour the prince royal was no more, the nation had lost the reason of its indulgence. That no longer existed, in the anticipation of which the country at large had consented to forego the pursuit of what it held to be its legitimate desires. There was in the near future no hope, in virtue whereof the present was to be resignedly borne. When the sable hangings were taken down from Nôtre Dame, and the tribute of *individual* kind-heartedness had been paid to personal and family bereavement, *then* the "black honey-moon," as Heine calls it, was over; and on the morrow the French nation was prepared to be exacting and troublesome, and to stand out upon its "rights." The 13th of July, 1842, opened the prologue of that drama of dispute and of political *tiraillement* of which the last scene was on the 24th of February, 1848; and this it is which we much wonder that our sagacious chronicler did not perceive.

Something else he discerned, which it may probably be safely asserted no one but himself, in the days he wrote in, even dreamed of; and this was the approaching downfall of

the *Bourgeoisie*, and its possible sacrifice to the domination of the military element represented by the army. This is extremely curious and interesting, because, at the period to which we allude, nothing could have been further from the views and notions of Frenchmen in general. Louis Philippe's advent to power was supposed to be pre-eminently the work of the so-called "*capacités*" of France; his reign was thought to represent the reign of intellect, (which in fact it did not to one quarter the degree imagined,) and it was an almost universal habit to regard the army as *intellectually* inferior to the otherwise cultivated classes. If we had time or space to open a parenthesis upon this subject, it might not be hard to prove that here again a great error of judgment was committed. The pen may be said to have superseded the sword under Louis Philippe's government, because those who wielded the former were more noisy, more overbearing, more *fanfaron*, than are habitually the most terrible swash-bucklers; but the reign of Louis Philippe was not on that account the reign of intelligence, and the pen did not rule with the king's consent, for no man, perhaps, had a stronger dislike (in which his ministers for the last seven or eight years largely partook) for the scribblers who thought that office and "place" were the positive and imprescriptible birthright of their quills. In that sense it is possible that the present emperor scarcely carries his distaste for professional writers, and for individuals who cold-bloodedly start in life resolved to find their fortune at the bottom of an ink-bottle, to a greater extent than Louis Philippe did; but nevertheless it is not to be denied, that what is often falsely termed "public opinion" maintained the superiority of quill-men over drill-sergeants. The epaulette was at a discount, and it was commonly held that one of the proofs of the country's undeniable political progress lay in the fact of her having escaped from the *prestige* of military glory, and from the belief in the plumed, spurred, and helmeted heroes of the empire. These were banished to chimney-boards in road-side inns. Even M. Scribe found that in the *Vaudeville* and the *Opera Comique* they no longer "took," and gave them up in disgust. *Les Colonels* were gone by, even at the *Gymnase*, and this in spite of

M. Thiers and the return of the Emperor's coffin from St. Helena. Yet at this very moment Heine (in January, 1842) writes : —

“What is to become of this country? What is to be done against this ever-increasing individualism, this *particularism*, this extinction of all *esprit de corps*, that brings on the moral death of nations? The money-worship has brought this state of things about. But will it or can it last? or will an event of all-superseding force, a stroke of chance, or a great public disaster, reunite together men's minds and hearts in France? No nation is abandoned of Heaven; and when a nation slumbers from fatigue or indolence, Heaven prepares its future awakers, who, hidden in some remote, dark corner are biding their time, and awaiting the hour of the general uprising. Where now are the awakers watching? I have often asked this in a whisper, and the answer, mysteriously given, is, ‘The army!’ And I hear it said around me, ‘Here in the army is still a strong feeling of patriotism and nationality; here under the tricolored flag have taken refuge those generous instincts that the reigning industrialism repulses and turns into ridicule; here is still to be found civic virtue, the valorous love of honor and high deeds, and the faculty of ardent enthusiasm; and whilst everywhere else predominate discord and social decomposition, the healthiest life breathes here still, and the sternest authority meets with obedience; here is discipline, here is at least a unity, — an armed one.’ I have even heard it hinted, that a by no means impossible event would be the overthrow of the present reigning *Bourgeoisie* by the army, which would thus enact once more a second 18th Brumaire in presence of a second *Directoire*.” (This is written, do not let us forget, in 1842!) “So after all, then, the burden of the song would be, Sabre-Government; and humanity and society would be once again treated to all the bustle made by glory, with its eternal *Te Deums*, with the foul-smelling tallow of its illuminations, with its big gold-epauletted heroes, and its permanent cannon-fire.” — pp. 228, 229.

Were we not justified in saying that Heine's *Lutèce* was a “prophecy of the past”?

But Heine only foresaw here the ridiculous part of “Sabre-Government,” as he terms it. He supposed that the sword, if appealed to against the corruption of the *Bourgeoisie* and the industrial spirit, would exercise a purifying influence. He did not advert to the possible fact of identity of corrup-

tion in both army and *Bourgeoisie*; he did not see, in the dim advance of years, the "gold-epauletted heroes" as greedy for gain as the traders in gold themselves. He did not image forth to himself a state of society in which the sword should be the mere instrument of oppression, in which brute force should supersede intelligence, but in which the worship of probity and honor should not be offered up more ardently by the *Maréchal de France* than by the stock-jobbers. Heine thought of the army as the refuge of honesty, and did not dream of a period when dishonesty should be everywhere. This, however, is a detail. The curious part of the whole matter is, that, in the lazy flood of fat security that was little by little mollifying France at the time our German poet made his observations on the country, he should have been able to admit the possibility of a time coming when the then apparently most obsolete of all forms of government — military rule — would be required as a counterpoise and cure for the gangrene that was gradually setting in.

"Every twenty years (or even less)," says a great intellectual authority in France, "you have fresh representatives of momentary power; they do not attain to the dignity of an aristocracy, but for the time being they constitute Public Importance." This is so true, that any foreigner coming to Paris after an absence of some years and a change of government, would fancy himself in a country quite different from the one he knew before. Instead of dukes, he would find bankers; instead of generals, declaimers; instead of poets, political economists. There, where he might have left M. de Richelieu, M. de Serre, or M. de Montmorency, high in their fellow-countrymen's esteem, he would return to find that they were "inadmissible," "*rococo* in the extreme," "wholly unbusiness-like," and "foolish," — types only whereby to appreciate the utter stupidity of those whom they had governed. He would in all safety allow himself to admire the "practical capacities" that had succeeded in the task of directing what Heine calls "that vulgar shop, the state"; for these had been borne upon the current of popular favor to their position, by the main force of their superiority. But lo! some years later, Public Importance, after being personified in

Thiers, Guizot, Villemain, Cousin, De Broglie, De Remusat, or Molé, allows itself to be again vested in men without consideration or fame, in men to whose names *no distinction* attaches, and whose title to power seems to be that they are socially and intellectually nothing. An American who should at this moment, for instance, visit Paris, would, if he did not dive down somewhat beneath the surface, wonder where had disappeared what he heard of once as the notabilities of France. Or if he were just starting into life, and were too young to have heard much of the political history of the last quarter of a century, he would take for the notabilities of France men like Messrs. Fould, Baroche, Morny, Troplong, etc., would be liable to form but a mediocre notion of the integrity or intelligence of a leading nation of Europe, and would inevitably ask himself what could be men's ideas of "master-minds," if they found any such to admire and extol in France. Those that *are* belong to a kind that affords small hold to the esteem of the upright or intellectual, and of those that *were* there is literally no trace. Of the mere talents of the latter as writers, historians, philosophers, and critics,—commentators, in short, upon others' deeds,—there never was greater proof than at this hour; for they all have written, or are writing, books that will last while the literary monuments of France endure. But of these men themselves, not as commentators, but actors,—doers of deeds,—we repeat it, there is absolutely no trace. From this point of view, therefore, Heine's *Lutèce* is not merely a curious or interesting, it is an invaluable work; a faithful record of the lives of those men who during eighteen years personified Public Importance in France,—a true picture of the society that was the reigning society of that time, and is now no more, but is broken up, dispersed, its component elements scattered here and there.

For those who had known and observed the France described by Henri Heine, *Lutèce* is a charming, and, in many respects, a touching remembrancer of what is by-gone; for those who were strangers to the whole, it is an abundant source of information, to be relied on like ocular testimony. Heine's book gives you (unlike most pictures) the reality of

detail and the truth of general effect. After reading it attentively, you not only possess with precision certain facts, but you see them framed, as it were, in the smaller incidents of every-day life that surrounded them, and made, so to say, the decoration of the scene. You follow society in its goings and comings, watching who moves it, and also how it is moved. You pass your mornings at the *Chambre des Députés*, and your evenings in the *coulisses* of the Grand Opera, amongst the full-blown, bloomless, long-established, famous, fashionable *chieftainesses* of the *corps de ballet*, whom our author so wittily and truly styles "*La Pairie de la Danse*"; and you learn here indirectly, and by an apparently frivolous application, to recognize one of the principles that governed and helped to ruin France,—the distrust and dislike of youth; one of the immense mistakes of the *régime* of July, which contributed to banish from it all lofty and generous impulse, and to mark it in the eyes of the world more with the seal of cunning and sordidness than even with that of corruption. Guided by the poet of the *Reisebilder*, you pass from the statesman's study to the artist's studio; from the concert-room, where Franz Liszt exhibits his hair and his talent on the piano-forte to an audience in contortions of enthusiasm, and utterly incapable in fact of distinguishing whether he plays well or ill, to the race-course of Chantilly, where men risk their fortunes upon a thing they neither do well nor are amused by. You *live* in Paris, with the men and women of the day, who, living, surround you and initiate you into the secrets of their existence. You have clearly impressed upon your sense all the truth, and all the falseness, of the period, copied exactly by the chronicler.

We have perhaps far too lengthily tried to give our readers on this side the Atlantic a notion of what *Lutèce* really is; but we would seriously advise such of them as are curious of what has been arrogantly styled "*le plus beau royaume après celui du ciel*," to read the book. They will find that we have not said too much of it, and that it perpetuates an historical epoch, the traces of which are being more and more every day effaced from the political and social surface of France.